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STORY OF ERSKINE.

THE story of Wedderburn, an Edinburgh boy, who, reared in the profundities of the Mint Close, came to be Lord Chancellor of England, is rivalled in romantic interest in the history of the Hon. Thomas Erskine, also an Edinburgh youth, with but a poor patrimony, who, by dint of talent, rose to the same high dignity. Erskine came a little later into the world than Wedderburn. He was born 10th January 1750, and must have been in his seventh year when Wedderburn enacted the extraordinary scene in the Court of Session already pictured, and, like a fury, bolted off to push his fortune in London. In the case of Erskine, there occurs no such explosion of temper; and his early history is every way more exemplary and pleasing.

Genteel as was the Mint Close as a place of residence at the middle of the last century, it was scarcely more so than certain parts of the High Street, where there were common stairs leading to as many as nine or ten stories, each occupied by a separate family—the gentility, of course, always diminishing as you ascended to the roof—Peers, Lords of Session, or perhaps Dowager Ladies of quality, residing in the lower floors, doctors of divinity or of medicine higher up, tradesmen in the garrets—a queer but not unhappy jumble of people living in mutual respect of each other, and making few complaints as to their scanty accommodation. In one of those tall buildings, pretty high in the stair, dwelt Henry-David, fifth Earl of Buchan. In point of etiquette, his lordship should have lived in the first or second floor above the shops; but narrow circumstances compelled him to be satisfied with one of the higher floors, which could be had for a comparatively moderate rent. It is not quite easy to understand how one in the position of an earl, with his countess and family, should have been able to live with any degree of comfort in a floor of only three or four small apartments, elevated a hundred feet above the ground, and wholly destitute of modern appliances. Yet, the thing was done. To give an appearance of roominess, a good deal was effected

by having beds to resemble a wardrobe or chest of drawers. As for the servant-girl, she slept under the kitchen dresser.

Such was the town residence of the Earl of Buchan. He had an old castle somewhere in the country, but it had fallen to ruin, and he possessed no means to put it in repair. His available revenue at this time was only two hundred pounds a year. Having married a daughter of Sir James Steuart, Bart. of Goodtrees, and brought on himself the obligations of a family, his lordship was fain to seek a dwelling in town, for the sake of cheap education for his children. In his efforts at an economical style of living, he was nobly seconded by his wife. The Countess of Buchan is spoken of as having been a woman of acute intellect, elevated taste, sincere piety, and strong common-sense. She had three sons, David, Henry, and Thomas, and a daughter, Isabella, all of whom she taught to read, and otherwise instructed. In time, the boys went to the High School, a seminary of learning well adapted for grounding in the classics. Here, Thomas made some progress. His daily fare, like that of his brothers, was what was usual among Scotch boys, even among the higher class of families—a basin of oatmeal porridge with milk for breakfast, and 'kail' or broth with a piece of bread for dinner. The earl could not afford to give meals of a costly nature. Friends dropped in to tea at six o'clock in the evening, and so far the junior members of the family had an opportunity of seeing some good society, and hearing intelligent conversation. The talk was often on religious and ecclesiastical topics; for the Erskines were related to persons who took a leading part in church polity. Small as were the outlays on these little tea-drinkings, they were felt to press rather heavily; and to lessen general expenses, the family removed to St Andrews, where rents were lower, education somewhat cheaper, and fewer friends to be entertained. Tom, as he was called, was here advanced in his learning, and became noted for his activity and powers of memory. At the dancing-school, he learnt to dance *Shantreus*, and to acquit himself creditably in a

minuet. The cost of the schooling was not great, but we can fancy that even at St Andrews, with all the scheming and economy of the earl and countess, they had a severe struggle to maintain a decent appearance, and make both ends meet.

Some people—perhaps a good many—with no more than two hundred pounds a year, would spend nearly the whole on personal indulgences, and care little about educating their children. In the present case, with honours to sustain, there was a far higher sense of duty. David, the eldest son and heir, styled Lord Cardross, was sent to Leyden to complete his education; Henry was educated for the Scottish bar; and Isabella, the daughter, needed to be brought forward in lady-like accomplishments. Tom came rather worst off. With such pulls on his slenderly filled purse, the earl could not see his way to bring up his youngest son to a learned profession. If the boy had been allowed his will, he would have preferred to go into the army; but there were no funds wherewith to purchase a commission; and, to make the best of things, he agreed to enter as a midshipman on board a man-of-war. An opening of this kind being procured on board the *Tartar*, a vessel under command of Sir David Lindsay, he was assigned to a life at sea. Equipped in a cocked-hat, a blue jacket, and fanciful small-sword, he embarked at Leith, March 1764, bidding farewell to his parents, and doubtful as to his future prospects. Sailing down the Firth of Forth, and seeing Arthur Seat melting away in the distance, all before him was dark and uncertain. The utmost he looked forward to was rising to the rank of a lieutenant. How little was he aware of his destiny! The next time he saw the towering heights of his native city, he had attained to social eminence as a peer of the realm!

Fortunately, there was an elasticity of spirit in Erskine which enabled him to bear up under a harsh routine of duty. Things were then coarsely conducted in ships of war, as is shewn by Smollett's inimitable descriptions in *Roderick Random*. Minutely attentive to every detail of the service, the young midshipman lost no opportunity of supplying the deficiencies of his education by reading and study; nor was he less careful in treasuring up every kind of professional knowledge that was available. His ship having gone to the West Indies, he there picked up information regarding the country and the state of the labouring population. On his return voyage, in acknowledgment of his steadiness and skill in seamanship, he was appointed acting-lieutenant, a circumstance which opened up the hope of rising in his profession. Great, accordingly, was his disappointment when the ship was paid off at Portsmouth, with no immediate prospect of his being again employed. He was now eighteen years of age; his father had just died, and the prospect was sufficiently blank. Returning to his first fancies, he determined to go, if possible, into the army. The small sum left to him by his father enabled

him to procure an ensign's commission in the Royal Scots, or First Regiment of Foot. This change of profession took place in 1768, after an experience of four years at sea.

Erskine was now a subaltern officer in a marching regiment, flitting about from town to town, parading in a scarlet uniform, killing time by reading at circulating libraries, dancing at balls, and enjoying the ordinary amount of flirtation. So went on two years; when a flirtation with one of the belles of a provincial town—a lady of respectable family, but no fortune—abruptly led to a marriage with her, 1770. This was in some sense an imprudent act, yet it really proved to be auspicious. It inspired him to think more earnestly than he had done before, and evoked the highest qualities of his mind. Sent with his regiment to Minorca, he was allowed to take his wife along with him. He was absent for two years, during which he devoted every spare moment to mental improvement, and made himself familiar with the writings of Shakspeare, Milton, and other great English poets, some of which he learnt to repeat from memory. The early instruction in religious matters, inculcated by his mother, now became publicly serviceable. He was selected to act as chaplain to his regiment, which was essentially Scotch, and his sermons and extempore prayers, delivered with fervour, gave unqualified satisfaction. One would say, with such a well-balanced mind, and gifts of oratory, there need have been little apprehension as to the future.

Back to England in 1772, he figured for a season in society in London, was introduced to Dr Johnson, and, as Boswell tells us, had the honour of wrangling with that incomparable gossip and disputant. In 1773, he was promoted to be a lieutenant in his regiment, and again was kept on the move from town to town. This idling away of existence, as he felt it to be, was irksome and hopeless. He could not buy steps in the service. Was he to live and die a lieutenant? No; something better must be thought of. Meditating on the awkwardness of his position, he, one day, by way of a little recreation, entered a court-room in which the town assizes were held. This was in August 1774. He was dressed in his regimentals, and attracted the attention of the presiding judge, Lord Mansfield, who, on learning that he was a son of the late Earl of Buchan, invited him to sit on the bench beside him, and, further, took some pains to explain to him the nature of the case that was being tried. This was the turning-point in Erskine's fate. He suddenly grasped at the idea of studying for the law, and from what he saw and heard, felt assured that he could have little difficulty in excelling the barristers to whose pleadings he had just listened.

A new chapter now opens in the life of Erskine. He had tried two means of livelihood, and they had failed. A third was now to be attempted. The hazard was considerable. His brothers were uneasy at his resolution; but his mother, with a

consciousness of his abilities, had no fears as to the result.

There were several difficulties to be encountered. He would, in the first place, require to study three years for the degree of M.A. at Oxford or Cambridge; then he must be admitted as a law student at Lincoln's Inn. How was all this to be accomplished while he was still in the army, and where was the money to come from to pay his fees? These untoward obstructions were successfully overcome. He procured leave of absence for six months from his regiment; and, as regards the routine of study at the university, we believe he derived some privileges in virtue of his birth. He got through his terms at Cambridge, and at last he sold his commission for a sum which gave him a lift onward. It needed it all. He had a wife with an increasing family. They were stowed away in lodgings at Kentish Town, one of the north-west suburbs of London, and the whole, as well as himself, practised the most rigorous economy. Looking at the position in which he was placed, with absolutely no friends to aid in his advancement, we can scarcely picture anything more lonely or depressing. Erskine, however, had in him the right stuff, out of which great men are buoyed to the surface. All he needed was a lucky chance to bring himself into a blaze of notoriety.

In July 1778, he was called to the bar, and for some months he underwent certain private discipline as a pleader. In November, the lucky chance came, and it did so in a way so curious and unforeseen, as to deserve special notice. Being invited to spend the day with a friend, Mr Moore, he was on his way to do so, when, in leaping across a ditch at Spa Fields, he slipped his foot and sprained his ankle. In much pain, he was carried home, and the engagement at his friend's house was necessarily broken off. Towards the evening, he felt himself so much recovered, that he resolved to join a dinner-party, for which an invitation had been received in the course of the day. He went—the inducement to dine at home not being particularly great. It happened to be a large dinner-party. There was much lively conversation with sallies of wit, in which Erskine shone with his accustomed brilliance. He made a favourable impression on Captain Baillie, an old salt, whom he had never seen before. Baillie was full of his own story. It was a case of oppression. For having, in a printed statement, shewn up certain gross abuses in the administration of Greenwich Hospital, he had, through the influence of Lord Sandwich, the First Lord, been suspended by the Board of Admiralty, and a prosecution for libel now impended over him in the Court of King's Bench. Discovering that Erskine had been a sailor, and was now called to the bar, he, without saying a word on the subject, determined to have him for one of his counsel.

Next day, while sitting in a despondent mood, Erskine heard a smart knock at the door. An attorney's clerk enters, and puts in his hand a

paper along with a golden guinea. It was a retainer for the defendant in the case of the King *versus* Baillie. Any one can imagine his delight at the unexpected circumstance. The guinea, his first fee, was treasured as a family keepsake. At first, he was not aware that there were to be along with him four senior counsel, each of whom would speak before him; and a knowledge of the fact was rather discouraging. Still, he studied and mastered the case; his acquaintance with sea-affairs and seamen adding zest to his mode of treatment. Before the case came on, three of the seniors were for a compromise. Erskine resolutely stood out. He saw his game. At the debate in court, before Lord Mansfield, these seniors were dry and prosy. The fourth, Mr Hargrave, began to speak, but he was compelled to leave by indisposition. It was too late to do any more that day, and the case was adjourned, which was fortunate, for the court would next day listen unjaded to Erskine's line of argument.

On the day following, 24th November 1778, the great day of Erskine's triumph, the case was left to his guidance. He stepped forward modestly, and, in a pleasing tone of voice, stated that he appeared as junior counsel for the defence, and begged to be heard. He was unknown to every one, except, it might be, to Lord Mansfield, who, on a former occasion, had shewn him some polite attention. Warning as he advanced in his argument, he, in a flood of forensic eloquence, in bitter but just terms, pointed out the infamy of Lord Sandwich's proceedings, and besought the court to do justice to the object of his oppression. Instead of deprivation of office, fine, and imprisonment, poor Baillie deserved the highest approbation. 'The man,' he said, 'deserves a palace instead of a prison, who prevents the palace built by the public bounty of his country from being converted into a dungeon, and who sacrifices his own security to the interests of humanity and virtue.' The force, the truth of his eloquent harangue, produced an impression almost unprecedented. The court, crowded with men of distinction, was mute with astonishment. The speech was without rant, or mouthing, or any indecorum. It was fervid, elegant, and convincing; for it came from the heart, and was free from any of the hackneyed arts of a practised barrister. As the best tribute to so much eloquence, the case against the defendant was discharged. Baillie came off victorious. Erskine's fortune was made. As he left the court, and walked down Westminster Hall, attorneys pressed around him with briefs and fees. In the morning he was poor and comparatively unknown. In the evening he was famed, and in the way of making several thousands a year. Some one asked him how he had the courage to speak with such boldness to Lord Mansfield. The answer he gave has been immortalised. He said: 'Because I thought my little children were plucking at my gown; and that I heard them saying: "Now, father, is the time to give us bread."'

After this, Erskine pursued a successful career at the bar, without, as was remarked, incurring either envy or detraction. His good temper and geniality of manner made him a universal favourite. In 1779, he was employed in defence of

Admiral Lord Keppel, who had been wrongfully accused of misconduct at the battle with the French fleet off Ushant. He was successful in getting a verdict of acquittal; and full of gratitude for his zeal and industry, Keppel presented him with a thousand pounds.

It is unnecessary to pursue the details of his forensic and political achievements—how he defended Lord George Gordon, Horne Tooke, and others, became member of parliament for Portsmouth, and rising in his profession, was appointed Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, and raised to the peerage as Baron Erskine of Restormel, 1806. Owing to a change of administration, he did not long retain the office of Chancellor. While a judge, he was liked for his suavity. It never has been said that he was eminent as a jurist. He was celebrated mainly for his brilliant oratorical qualities, the saliency of his wit, his manly courage in defending right against might, and his indefatigable industry. He was fond of fun and jocularities, and uttered innumerable bon-mots, though, in these respects, he was perhaps outshone by his brother, Hon. Henry Erskine, who distinguished himself as an advocate at the Scottish bar. Lord Erskine's wife, who had been his faithful and enduring companion in depressed circumstances, unfortunately did not live to see her husband Lord Chancellor. She died in 1805, before he reached this dignity. He mourned and long survived her, marrying a second time in his old age. His lordship died while on a visit to Scotland, in 1823, and was succeeded in his title by his eldest son. The only thing we have to add respecting Lord Erskine is, that his *Speeches* have been collected and published, and testify to his extraordinary genius.

W. C.

THE STORY OF A GAS.

It is nearly a century since the celebrated Dr Priestley, on exposing iron nails to the action of nitric oxide, discovered a gas whose properties, he admits, upset his most cherished ideas, being of such a nature that he would not have hesitated beforehand to pronounce them incompatible. What puzzled him was, that whilst the gas was almost instantly fatal to animals placed in it, yet it supported and even intensified the flame of a candle. To this anomalous gas he gave the name of 'dephlogisticated nitrous air'; which, however, gave place to that of 'nitrous oxide,' on the science of chemistry soon after being emancipated from the 'phlogiston' theory. But it is not with the name of its discoverer, but with that of another great chemist, that this remarkable gas will be for ever associated. The story of how the latter came to investigate its properties is worth recalling. At the end of last century there lived at Clifton a physician named Dr Beddoes, a man of great abilities, and of restless mental energy, which, however, was not seldom misdirected. He was all his life a man of hobbies, and one of them was, that disease could be cured by the inhalation of 'factitious airs,' that is, artificially generated gases. Most of the elementary and compound gases, it must be borne in mind, had been only recently discovered. Of their physical

and chemical properties, a good deal was already known, but their physiological, and consequently their therapeutical, qualities had been little investigated. To a man of active imaginative faculty like Beddoes, the possibilities of the application of these aerial fluids to the cure of disease opened up a boundless field of speculation. He gave up the chemical lectureship at Oxford, in order to devote himself to a course of research into the curative virtues of various gases. For this purpose, he took a house in Bristol; but when his landlord, and his neighbours in Hope Square, came to know of his object, they were not a little troubled in spirit, and for a time it seemed very doubtful whether he would be permitted a peaceful occupation of the premises. The fear was, that the house, or, possibly, the whole square, might some fine morning be propelled skywards by the irresistible force of his imprisoned 'airs,' or that the surrounding atmosphere might be poisoned by the fumes generated in their production. When these alarming anticipations had been allayed, the sanguine doctor set hard to work, and in a few years managed so thoroughly to imbue others with his own hopes and ideas, that in 1798 the British Medical Pneumatic Institution was established by public subscription. Its founder had the sagacity to recognise the great merit of some papers on Light and Heat, written by a young man of only nineteen years of age, living in one of the remotest parts of Cornwall. To him Beddoes at once offered the scientific superintendence of the new Institution, which included a laboratory for experiment, a hospital, and a lecturing theatre. Humphry Davy—for he it was—eagerly accepted an appointment so congenial to his tastes.

The young chemist forthwith began a series of experiments on the physiological effects of different gases, in the course of which he, more than once, all but killed himself, by resolutely inhaling some of the most deadly aerial fluids. One of the very first of the gases to which he turned his attention was Priestley's 'dephlogisticated nitrous air.' Shortly before, an American chemist, named Mitchell, had propounded a theory of contagion by which this gas was credited with a capacity of mischief-working perfectly appalling. It was stated to be the active principle in all contagion, and to be capable of producing the most terrible effects when respired in the minutest quantities, or even when applied to the skin. To investigate the qualities of so pestilential an 'air' required some little courage. Davy first satisfied himself by cautious attempts, frequently repeated, that the gas could be breathed, at least in small quantities, without any of the dire effects ascribed to it. It should here be mentioned that in Davy's experiments the gas was inhaled in a diluted form, as his arrangements did not provide for a complete exclusion of the air in the course of the experiment. Convinced that it was so far innocuous, he at last determined on inhaling continuously a tolerably large quantity of the gas. He found that the first

inspirations caused slight giddiness; this was succeeded by an uncommon sense of fullness in the head; then shortly after came a sensation analogous to gentle pressure on all the muscles, attended by a highly pleasurable thrilling, particularly in the chest and extremities. 'The objects around me,' he says, 'became dazzling, and my hearing more acute, and at last an irresistible propensity to action was indulged in. I recollect but indistinctly what followed; I know that my motions were various and violent.' These effects soon ceased on discontinuing the respiration.

This experiment shewed Davy that he had got to do with a gas of very extraordinary physiological properties, and it stimulated him to further investigation. He soon found that the feeling of exhilaration was diminished when too large a quantity was respired; and further, that the mental effects were by no means uniform, but depended to a considerable degree on the bodily and mental condition at the time of the experiment. Sometimes the feelings produced were those of intense intoxication, attended by but little pleasure; while at other times the respiration of the gas gave rise to sublime emotions, connected with highly vivid ideas. He noticed that the delight was always most intense when he inhaled the gas after excitement, whether from moral or physical causes. The most remarkable experiment which he made was one intended to test the effects of the long-continued inhalation of the gas in a form more diluted than ordinary. For this purpose he shut himself up in an air-tight chamber filled with the diluted gas. We have not space to quote the narrative of his impressions; but after remaining in the chamber an hour and a quarter, the desire for action became so painful that he came out, and immediately thereafter began anew to respire the gas from a silken bag. His feelings were now raised to a state which he evidently finds it difficult to portray in words: 'A thrilling extending from the chest to the extremities was almost immediately produced. I felt a sense of tangible extension highly pleasurable in every limb; my visible impressions were dazzling, and apparently magnified. By degrees, as the pleasurable sensations increased, I lost all connection with external things; trains of vivid visible images rapidly passed through my mind, and were connected with words in such a manner as to produce perceptions perfectly novel. I existed in a world of newly connected and newly modified ideas. I theorised; I imagined I made discoveries.' When awakened from this semi-delirious trance by the bag being withdrawn from his mouth, he says: 'Indignation and pride were the first feelings produced by the persons about me. My emotions were enthusiastic and sublime. As I recovered my former state of mind, I felt an inclination to communicate the discoveries I had made during the experiment. I endeavoured to recall the ideas; they were feeble and indistinct. One collection of terms, however, presented itself; and with the most intense belief and prophetic manner, I exclaimed: "Nothing exists but thoughts! The universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains!" Here, then, to all appearance, was the discovery of a panacea for human ills, such as had never entered into the imagination of poet to conceive. De Quincey says, that when he first experienced the pleasures of opium-eating, he felt that he had made the discovery that happiness

was a thing which could be bottled in a small phial and carried in the waistcoat pocket. But here was not happiness merely, but ecstasy—not, indeed, in quite so compact and portable a form, but easily generated in any quantity by the simple process of decomposing nitrate of ammonia by heat! In establishing his Institution, Dr Beddoes had in view only to cure and alleviate, by means of his 'airs,' the diseases of the body. Might he not now, with this

Sweet oblivious antidote,
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?

Davy's discovery, of course, soon got wind, and the British Medical Pneumatic Institution found itself famous. It was now visited by many literary and scientific men, curious to experience the effects of the wonder-working gas. Southey, Coleridge, Lovell Edgeworth, and Dr Roget, were among the number of those experimented on. Its effects were found to vary very much in different constitutions. Some were obviously much more susceptible to its influence than others, but all in more or less degree bore testimony to its exhilarating qualities, and its power to produce new and delightful sensations.

But the question still remained to be tested, whether an agent whose effects on the constitution were so singularly manifested, possessed any useful qualities to sanction its administration in cases of disease. Did this entrancing 'air' resemble in its influence the serviceable Scotch brownie, or only one of those fantastic sprites whose pranks are of little or no earthly use to any one? Experience soon appeared to shew that 'laughing-gas,' by which name it was now popularly known (though it may be remarked its action on some persons is to cause hysterical weeping), was of little use except as a kind of physiological curiosity. Dr Beddoes tried its therapeutic virtues in various ailments, but with little effect, except, indeed, that in one case a few whiffs of it nearly liberated a patient from all her mortal ills. One or two psychologists, also, curious to establish its precise effects on the mental faculties, and possibly hopeful, through the exaltation of the intellectual powers produced by it, to solve some great psychological problem, subjected themselves to its influence, but, as the result of Davy's last-mentioned experiment might have indicated, with no effect. Oliver Wendell Holmes tells us, half-laughingly, half-gravely, that on one occasion he inhaled a pretty full dose of ether—a substance whose physiological effects closely resemble in many points those of nitrous oxide—with the determination to put on record, at the earliest moment of regaining consciousness, the thought he should find uppermost in his mind. He relates that, when under the influence of the ether, 'the veil of eternity was lifted, the one great truth which underlies all human experience, and is the key to all the mysteries that philosophy has sought in vain to solve, flashed upon me in a sudden revelation. Henceforth, all was clear; a few words had uplifted my intelligence to the level of the knowledge of the cherubim. As my natural condition returned, I remembered my resolution, and staggering to my desk, I wrote, in ill-shaped straggling characters, the all-embracing truth still glimmering in my consciousness. The words were these (children will smile, the wise will ponder): *A strong smell of turpentine prevails throughout.*'

After the time of Davy, laughing-gas was almost thrown aside by men of science, as it did not appear capable of subserving any useful function. It now fell into somewhat disreputable company. Electro-biologists, peripatetic lecturing mesmerists, and others of the like stamp, pretended publicly to exhibit its physiological properties. But it eventually shewed itself possessed of qualities which fitted it for better society. Davy himself, with the prescience of genius, suggested an application of it which may be said to be the first practical hint towards the use of our modern anæsthetics. 'As nitrous oxide,' he says, 'seems capable of destroying physical pain, it may probably be used with advantage during surgical operations.' It was more than sixty years after this suggestion had been made, before the gas began to be used as an anæsthetic. It was in America that nitrous oxide (as well as chloroform) was first employed to produce insensibility; and from that country it was introduced into England as a tried and useful anæsthetic, in 1868. When used for this purpose, the gas is inhaled, not in the diluted form in which Davy used it, but entirely free from all admixture of atmospheric air. It is now the anæsthetic commonly used by dentists. For the purpose of the operating surgeon, it is not well adapted, as the period of insensibility from one administration lasts only about a minute, or a minute and a half at furthest. But, for the purpose of the dentist, this period is usually sufficient; and one of the commonest of dental operations may now be submitted to with perfect freedom from pain. The rapidity with which insensibility is produced, the absence of any unpleasant odour or troublesome after-effects, and its comparative safety, all eminently fit it for the purpose to which it is now commonly applied. The chief disadvantage in its employment, up to this time, has been the costliness of the apparatus for making and administering it; but this is now in some measure obviated, as the gas may be procured in small compass in a liquid form, and liberated for use as required.

The most recent experimental application of nitrous oxide in this country involves a return to the idea of the old Bristol physician. Dr Beddoes, we have seen, applied it to diseased bodies; but, obvious as the idea appears, it does not seem to have occurred to him that its peculiar action rather indicated its applicability to mental maladies. An agent capable of stimulating the mental powers, and producing exalted emotions, would, of all others, appear suited to that class of the mentally alienated who remain continually plunged in the depths of melancholy. The gas in its dilute form has lately been tried in this class of mental diseases; but the published accounts do not permit us to say that the results are very encouraging. For the time, it is true, it wonderfully stimulates the dormant mental powers, and enables the sufferer to recall with vividness the events of the past. Even in cases in which the power of coherent speech appeared to have been lost for ever, the inhalation of the gas has enabled the patients to relate, in a collected manner, long passages of their past lives. For the moment, it often gives a new direction to the thoughts, changing in a marked manner the current of the ideas. But the effects are only transient; and it is possible that were we acquainted with the mode of action of the gas, this tentative application of it might turn out to be a

mistake. But in regard to this question of its physiological action—what changes it undergoes and effects within the body—there is hardly anything yet known.

THE BEST OF HUSBANDS.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—MR BLAKE'S SUBMISSION.

A MORE disconcerted expression of countenance than was worn by Mr Dennis Blake, as he sat listening to the inspector's words, with bent-down head and with his wrists so much nearer to one another than custom or comfort would have dictated, it would have been hard to imagine. Such an extraordinary case of table-turning was never seen as had just occurred in the little parlour at Rosebank, and, what was still more remarkable, the operator himself, and not the spectators, was the person most astonished by the result. His dogged face, eloquent as it was of rage, and fear, and malice, wore a look of wonder and bewilderment that preponderated over all.

'I should like to speak a word with Mrs Milbank in private,' ejaculated he sullenly, when Mr Brain had finished his peroration, and laid his hand upon Blake's shoulder, in sign that he had taken possession of him as his lawful prize.

'I have not a doubt of it,' observed the inspector coolly; 'but I shall not permit you to do anything of the kind; for, if you are going to try the game on again of which I suspect you, it is my duty to shield this lady from your designs; while, if there is really any truth in your late statements, it is still more my duty that nothing should occur in the way of composition of a felony. That is a third charge, by the bye—supposing this cock-and-bull story of yours to have any ground at all—that will be urged against you in the proper place. You were ready enough to keep everything dark, remember, upon what you were pleased to call "equitable conditions." Altogether, Mr Dennis Blake, it seems to me that you are in a pretty considerable hole.'

The extreme depth of this hole, however, could only be appreciated by the person in it; the arguments of the inspector were incontestable; but besides, there was this supreme and bitterest conviction in Blake's breast, that the foe whom he had designed to ruin, and whose destruction he would gladly now have worked, no matter at what cost to himself, was probably at that moment beyond the reach of his malice. There seemed nothing for him but, by an abject submission, to save, if possible, his own skin.

'You can't compound a felony, Mr Inspector, if there was none to compound, you know,' muttered he sullenly: 'it was all gammon from beginning to end.'

'Oh, you admit that, do you?' answered the other contemptuously. 'Well, that will save the lawyers some trouble, at all events. But you'll find it more difficult to prove your breaking into the cellar was "all gammon" too.'

'I didn't take anything.'

'That's not the question, my man, though it is doubtless something that may be urged in mitigation of your crime, and in the proper place: you might just as well say you didn't get anything by your attempt to extort money out of this poor lady; it was not through any fault of yours that you failed, as I can witness.'

'With respect to that matter, Mr Brain,' observed Maggie gravely, 'I have myself no wish to proceed against this person. I confess that his vile and slanderous story—though not for one single instant did it obtain credence with me—has given me great distress and pain; but to punish him would be to punish myself also. I can imagine that so base a creature, finding his case hopeless, and having nothing to gain by an honest confession, would gratify his malignity and spite by repeating in a court of justice, and to as many ears as possible, the same atrocious falsehoods respecting my poor husband which you have just now heard him utter.'

'They would give him another year or two for that, however,' remarked the inspector parenthetically.

'Still, that would be little satisfaction to me, as compared with its cost. I speak quite plainly, and in this villain's presence, because, under no possible circumstance, will I hold converse with him again, and that he may understand, once for all, my position in regard to him. Why my husband did not give him up to justice, in the first instance'—

'Ah, why, indeed?' sneered Blake.

'You had better be quiet, my man,' said Mr Brain menacingly. 'I know your past almost as well as you do yourself, and I foresee your future much more clearly. If once you leave this room as my prisoner, Dennis Blake, it will be for good and all. You may shoot your little spurt of venom, as this lady suggests, but that will be your only consolation till you die; for you will be "a lifer." I daresay I need not tell you what that means.'

Blake's dusky cheek turned a shade paler; but he answered nothing, only moistened his dry lips with his tongue.

'I say,' continued Maggie firmly, 'that it may be just possible that you may have possessed yourself of some secret connected with my husband's affairs, which has induced him to spare you, and the divulging of which may harm his credit. To save him that much of annoyance or inconvenience, I would willingly overlook your offences; just as, if your death would serve him ever so slightly, I would willingly see you hanged. Upon my own account, I have not one shadow of fear of you, nor one grain of pity.'

Mr Inspector Brain placed and replaced one of his huge hands softly over the other, as though playing on an invisible concertina; his head, too, moved in time to Maggie's words; altogether, he looked the very personification of harmonious but inaudible applause.

'So far as I am concerned, then, Dennis Blake,' continued she, 'you are free to leave this house, upon the proviso, that you never enter it again, nor attempt to address me either by word or letter, nor venture to soil my husband's name by breathing it through your perjured lips. Disobey me in this in the least particular, and the law shall take its course with you from that moment; and what that course will end in, you have just heard.'

'Silence, silence!' exclaimed the inspector warningly, perceiving Blake about to speak. 'This is the last chance of getting out of your hole, my man, that you will ever have, and I recommend you not to throw it away. This great piece of good-fortune is not only far beyond what you deserve, but I have my doubts whether it is not

defeating the ends of justice. A hair in the balance would just now decide me to take you by the collar, and lay you by the heels at the police office, which you would only exchange for the county jail, and that, again, for Her Majesty's establishment at Portland. So far as you are concerned, I will go a step farther than this lady, and say, that it would be an inexpressible comfort and satisfaction to me to see you there; so you had better keep a civil tongue in your head, or, since that is probably impossible, be silent. I say, I am not at all sure that I am not overstepping my duty in permitting such an audacious reprobate and villain as you have proved yourself to be, to escape punishment. This lady, it is true, by not appearing against you, might cause the charge of extorting money to fall to the ground; but not only have I heard with my own ears your voluntary confession of having committed a burglary under this roof, but I have seen the evidence of the fact with my own eyes. You talk—in his absence—of having some "hold" upon one whom all who know him know to be an honest gentleman; but that hold (whatever it may be) is as nothing, let me tell you, to the hold I have on you. I have got you as tight as any terrier who has his teeth in a rat's neck—and, by all that's dear to the heart of an inspector, I have a mind to shake you out of your skin! Still, taking into consideration the circumstances of the case, as respects this lady—and without the least regard to you whatever—and since she has formally declined to prosecute you, I will, for this time, let you go at large. Only, I also have one proviso to make: don't you stop at Hilton; don't remain within ten miles of the beat of Inspector Brain, because you will find the air unhealthy for you. It ain't often that these bracelets, which become your wrists so well, are unlocked so easily.—Not a word; not a syllable: now, go.'

Mr Dennis Blake was not a gentleman given to poetic metaphor, or he might have likened himself, on this occasion of his departure, to the month of March, which is said to come in like a lion, but to go out like a lamb. The air of proprietorship which he had assumed on his arrival, had utterly disappeared, and was replaced by one of extreme dejection. He shambled rather than walked out of the parlour, nor did he venture to breathe a syllable, even of thanks, to the inspector for seeing him out of doors. Nay, when he found himself alone, except for the snow-flakes, and journeying homeward to the wretched lodgings that he had, doubtless, calculated upon soon exchanging for more eligible apartments, he did but mutter to himself, in dismal monotone, the reiterated word 'Blank, blank!' in reference, doubtless, to the unexpected aspect of that document upon which he had built so much, and which Mr Brain had considerably returned to him on his departure; moreover, his countenance was that of one who, after he has promised to himself a magnificent prize in the lottery of Life, has drawn a blank.

CHAPTER XXXV.—NEWS AT LAST.

There have been battles gained before and since that, after which the conqueror exclaimed: 'One more such a victory, and I am undone.' And so it was with Maggie, as she sat that night in the parlour at Rosebank, when the ally who had so largely

contributed to her enemy's discomfiture had left her, to enjoy her triumph alone. Such another conflict, no matter how signal might be the success attending it, would, she felt, be utterly beyond her strength. Spiritless, prostrate, utterly exhausted with her own exertions—though she had but stood on her defence throughout—she was mistress of the field, and that was all. She had read how largely the element of chance enters into the calculations of war; how its greatest successes have been attained by a lucky stroke, and how vain would have been the foresight of the most skilful generals, even when the dove-tailing of this and that event with one another has come off beyond all anticipation, had not some mischance, which they have not reckoned on their side at all, befallen their foe: and thus she knew it had been with her in respect to Dennis Blake.

She had calculated on the virtues of the terminable ink to confound her husband's accuser, and on the presence of the inspector of police to inspire him with terror; and they had not failed her; but notwithstanding this good-fortune, all would have been fruitless but for the unexpected confession from Blake's own lips, by which he had been placed, independently of his offence against herself, within the power of the law. Throughout that terrible interview, trying enough had she been alone, but ten times more trying since she had had to weigh every word before she spoke it, with regard to its effect upon her hidden audience, as well as on the man with whom she was face to face, she had borne up to the last, though every nerve was strung to the utmost, and her very blood had stood stagnant more than once; but now that it was over, it seemed that the victory had been purchased at the cost of life itself. In her complete and utter prostration, she could hardly believe that she was the self-same being who had endured the experience of the last two hours, and never shewn—but once—a sign of that weakness which she had felt in every fibre, and the exhibition of which would have been ruin. The thought of her husband's peril had alone sustained her, and now the peril was past, her strength departed with it.

Yes, the peril was past, at all events for the present; but the Thing, that had caused the peril—alas, no longer Nameless—had not passed; could never do so, as it seemed to her, but must remain before her eyes continually, a worse than Belshazzar's warning, since it was written in letters of blood. That much of Dennis Blake's narrative was true, she could have no doubt: no more doubt than Inspector Brain would have had, had it not been for that impotent and baseless finale, to which all had led, but which had never, of course, for an instant imposed upon herself. Without doubt, Blake had done the things he said he had done—indeed, they were sufficiently discreditable to be genuine—and it was even difficult for her to refuse credence to much that he had said of others. She perfectly well remembered—notwithstanding that she had so stoutly denied it—imitating, at Richard Milbank's request, the autograph of her present husband. Richard had been praising her skill in caligraphy and other arts of penmanship, and had playfully asked her to give examples of it, which she had very readily done; and it was now brought home to her mind, that Richard had on that occasion pushed something before her with a

'Suppose that this were a cheque, for instance,' and that she had signed it in John's name. This might have been that bill for a thousand pounds. That she believed it indeed, was certain, since it seemed to reveal to her, with the suddenness of the rise of a stage-curtain, the real character and object of the wretched man on whom she had once thrown away her love. The representations of her father and her friends—of those who had known Richard best, and better far than she, an inexperienced girl, could possibly have known him—had gone for nothing, or even made her more kind to his faults, more blind to his vices and his selfishness; and through the years that had intervened, though she had got to have a more sober and reasonable estimate of human affairs, and with them, insensibly, of Richard's character, she had still regarded him with tender charity: he had been in her eyes, if not indeed 'more sinned against than sinning,' still 'no one's enemy but his own'; but now that delusion had found its end. A man might even forge his brother's name, and yet leave something to be urged in extenuation; but to make an innocent girl, whom he professed to love, the unconscious instrument of his crime, was the act of a villain. That Maggie herself had been the victim of the device, did not affect the matter, for if, on the one hand, she might have felt more indignation on another's account than on her own, on the other hand, the remembrance of how much she had loved this man, how passionately she had clung to him, how bitterly she had regretted him, filled up the scale, and made his trespass heavy indeed.

And as he sank, so rose, in Maggie's eyes, his brother, John. For years, nay, for all his life, save since she had been his wife, she had done him wrong, and all for Richard's sake. His very virtues, because they had contrasted so with the other's defects, had been obnoxious to her; and if she had not applauded those who sneered at them, she had not rebuked them. Of his love for her, she had been unconscious, but it almost seemed to her now that she must have been wilfully blind to it. What a life of placid happiness, had she perceived that love, acknowledged it, reciprocated it, in those early days, might have been hers! nay, might have been *his*—whose wholesome heart her conduct had changed to gall: not the gall of bitterness, for of that he was incapable, but of disappointment, of humiliation, of despair. What a present might he have been enjoying; what a past might he have had to look back upon; what a future might be awaiting him! But *Now*! Now she was sitting alone, a deserted wife, and John was a wanderer and an exile, she knew not where, nor why! She might know *Why*, indeed, if she pleased: she might learn how much was true, how much was false, of Blake's dark tale, by the mere unfolding of the paper that lay hidden in her bosom; but that was not to be opened till he was dead, or until she had lost her faith in him. And she had not lost faith. Lost? nay, she had gained faith. For if she had not believed ill of him, even in her blindness to his gifts of good, was it likely that she should do so now that her eyes were opened to them, because this Dennis Blake accused him of ill-doing!

She did not, and she never would. Should John return to her to-morrow, or in ten years' time, or in twenty, it would be all the same. 'Here is your paper, still untouched, dear husband,' she would

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say; 'nor do I wish to hear one word of what it tells, unless you wish to speak it.'

That resolve was firm within her, and to it she clung; but the days crept miserably by, nevertheless, and the desolate watchful nights lagged wearily indeed. There is one misery, and perhaps only one in the long category of human ills, to which the mind cannot shape itself, or get accustomed, namely, the torture of suspense. What we know, and can see the end of, though that end be desolation and blank death—the loss of all (for it seems all) we love—can, in the end, be borne. Time, though we so passionately deny its power to do so, does heal that wound; the cure is slow perhaps; it may take years, and every year to us a century; and now and again the wound, touched by some thoughtless hand, or touched by none—the revisiting a once-loved scene, a sound remembered, the scent of a living flower, or the sight of a dead one—any one of these may cause it to bleed afresh, as on the first day of loss; yet the cure is certain. But for Suspense there is no cure, no intermission, no relief. The sense of loss, however great and overwhelming, is occasionally forgotten; the mind escapes from it, and wanders free, or sinks exhausted with its burden into slumber. Occupation is more or less possible to us; the voice of genius can pierce through the mists of time, and absorb us for a little in its magic words; if music cannot charm us from our melancholy, it can soften it, for it is the fountain of tears: but Suspense has no such assuagements. Books cannot rivet its eye, nor music its ear. It resents such would-be alleviations, as the sick babe in pain resents its nurse's lullabies. They hinder it from its one function and employment, which is to watch; to listen; to anticipate the evil that is about to fall, it knows not whence, and fulfil the haunting presage of Ruin.

It is scarcely too much to say that her missing husband was never out of Maggie's thoughts, since the very dreams from which she woke to a new day of miserable expectancy, were filled with him. Whatever she beheld, reminded her of him—as, indeed, well it might, for she persisted in remaining at Rosebank, despite the persuasions of her friends. 'Suppose he was to return, to-night, to-morrow, and find me gone—even but to my father's house,' was her feverish fear, 'and thereby miss his solace!' Nay, even the very words that others spoke to her, though studiously shaped to avoid it, would recall him to her memory. 'You will get quite gray, my darling, moping here alone,' her father had smilingly said to her on one occasion, striving to win her from her loneliness; but she only shook her head, and straightway pictured to herself her missing dear one, whose brown locks had indeed turned gray, and in whose heart, consumed she knew not by what anguish, youth had died out for ever!

Thus six weeks or so of winter passed away—a winter so unusually severe that it froze the rapid river that ran by the town, yet could not numb her sense of loss, nor cool her fever of expectancy—and then came Christmas: the hallowed time of reconciliation and reunion; when home seems more like home than at other seasons, and wife and husband sit beside the hearth with a stronger sense than common of their unity. But it was not so with her. She listened, as did other wives, for her husband's footsteps, but it was not, like

them, with gladsome expectation, nor even with expiring hope—for hope was dead; and it came, or seemed to come, a thousand times, to the cottage door, but never nearer, for it was but the wanton wind; and a thousand times his fingers tapped, or seemed to tap, at the closed panes, but it was but the pitiless snow and hail that mocked her; and a thousand times, at night, she heard, or seemed to hear, his breathing on the vacant pillow: and so she passed her Christmas. Her father came, bringing little Willie with him; but even in that there was no comfort yet: her eyes would rest upon the kind old man, who was so good to her, and who had loved her all his life, and never more (she knew) than now; but her thoughts were far away in aimless search of him she yearned for; or she would gaze upon the child at play, yet mark him not, or, if she marked him, lift her finger up for Silence. Silence for the step that never came.

At last the leaden-winged year drew to its close; and the morning of New Year's Eve broke in upon her loneliness in sheets of sleet and snow. She was sitting at her untasted breakfast, listening, as usual, to the stormful sounds without, when suddenly she heard the front door opened. Pale and trembling, she started to her feet, for the hour was too early for a visit from her father, and no one save himself and her husband was wont to enter the cottage without ringing. But the next moment she heard the stamping of feet and scraping of shoes, whereupon that little ray of hope, like all preceding rays, at once departed, and was quenched in darkness; for John would never have stopped in the lobby though snow environed him from head to heel, she knew, but would have come right on into her beloved presence. In this case, indeed, there was still more delay, for she heard Mrs Morden summoned, and their voices in hushed converse. The visitors, in fact, were her father and Mr Linch, and she had but to cast one look on their earnest faces as they entered the room, to know that they were the bearers of grave tidings.

'O father, you have news of John?' cried she.

'Yes, Maggie,' answered the old man, in broken tones; 'there is news; and alas, bad news.'

THE NAVAL PRISON AT LEWES.

A SHORT time ago we were permitted to visit the naval prison at Lewes, the county town of Sussex, which, we believe, is the only naval prison in the world. The building was originally the county jail of Sussex. It was bought by the government during the Crimean war, and served for a place of confinement for Russian prisoners; it was afterwards used as a barrack for marines; then as a convict hospital; and finally, in 1862, was handed over to the Admiralty, who instituted it as a naval prison for the incarceration of sailors and marines guilty of naval offences. This course of proceeding arose from a very correct desire to save our seamen from the contamination of prisoners in civil jails. It is a melancholy sight to see a soldier handcuffed and escorted into a common jail, for some military breach of discipline, and such a punishment is often the first step in a downward career. We have known a man go completely to the bad, after a very short sentence, who, till then, had always maintained a good character. The prevailing offence in the navy is absence without leave,

or overstaying leave. Insubordination is not a heavy percentage, but it may be considered an axiom that, whatever the offence, if searched to its origin, drunkenness will be found at the bottom of it. The naval prison will contain about one hundred and twenty men in solitary confinement; should there be more prisoners, the best behaved are 'associated,' and put together, but only then allowed to converse on ordinary subjects in the presence of a warder.

In going through the establishment, we are struck with the good order and dead silence that prevail, broken only by the monotonous voice of the warder conducting the shot-drill. There is an infirmary attached to the prison, but it is not in much requisition, and the deaths have only amounted to three cases during twelve years, out of over six thousand prisoners, which is about the number who have sojourned within the prison walls. This is an average of about five hundred a year. The number of tenants at one time depends very much on the presence or absence of the Channel Fleet and Flying Squadron. Either fleet returning home is sure to bring a cargo of delinquents for punishment. Every prisoner on admission is, according to the rules and regulations for naval prisons, strictly searched, in order that he may bring in nothing contraband; and whatever goods, whether money, pipes, tobacco, or anything he may have in his possession, are taken charge of and locked up in a depository for the purpose; and all such, together with his clothes, are entered regularly in a register, witnessed by the governor and a warder, and, on the man's discharge, are returned to him. Every prisoner is provided with prison clothing, which is more useful than ornamental, and marked with the distinguishing badge of the class into which he may be placed. He is also supplied with all other necessities during his residence in the prison.

The prisoners are divided into three classes, and receive, according to their class, such small privileges as may be accorded thereto. All men on entry are placed in the third class, from which it rests with themselves to rise to the second or first. The first class is reserved for such prisoners as may appear to merit some relaxation of punishment, from their steady, orderly behaviour, and proper submission to the rules of the establishment. However, this knowledge of their characters can only be obtained from experience, and, in consequence, every prisoner must perforce remain a certain period in the third class. Of course, men so promoted to the higher classes require to maintain their character, or they will be again remitted to the third class as a punishment. The exceptions to the above rule are those cases where solitary confinement forms a portion of the sentence; but as solitary confinement is always broken by intervals of ordinary imprisonment, a prisoner may, on release from solitary confinement, be placed in the first class. Every prisoner has the rules, so far as he is concerned, read out to him, and a copy is placed in every room and cell. Reconvicted prisoners may be promoted only under special restrictions. Prisoners who enter with a record of previous convictions by court-martial are necessarily placed in the third class, and if convicted within six months of expiration of a former sentence, have to serve out three-fourths of their present sentence in the

third class, one-half if convicted within twelve months of their last sentence, and one-fourth if within eighteen months thereof. Over this latter period, the governor—with whom, subject to the above restrictions, rests the classification of prisoners—may promote any prisoner to the first class.

The prison is moreover supervised by a Board of visitors, consisting of the naval commander-in-chief at Portsmouth, his flag-captain, two of the chief magistrates of Lewes, the Speaker of the House of Commons, and one or two more. These have power to award punishment, and also to recommend a relaxation of punishment in the cases of deserving characters.

The first class of prisoners perform the same number of hours of labour, drill, and duties as do the second class, but the work is of a lighter and pleasanter description. Another advantage of being in the first class is, that although portions of the sentence may be solitary confinement, the usual Sunday dinners are nevertheless allowed. After six P.M. and during meals, all prisoners who may for good conduct be associated are permitted to converse among themselves, under the supervision of a warder. Second-class prisoners have their full turn of hard labour, as shewn in the foregoing detail of time. Like the others, they are under the strictest surveillance, and are not allowed to exchange one word with another prisoner. The rule of silence is also imposed on the warders, except for the necessary orders and directions they may have to give. After the day's work is done, this class is permitted to read or receive instruction till bedtime, but still in silence. Prisoners of the third class perform all the usual prison labour; but after six P.M. instead of relaxation, they are employed till eight P.M. in picking oakum, and such light employment. Picking oakum, by the way, is, however, no small punishment, and, to unaccustomed hands, a very painful one.

All prisoners on admission have to sleep on bare boards, as a soldier does on guard, for one week, after which third-class men sleep as on guard every other night, and second-class men every third night; the prisoners of the first class, after completing the first week, have the regular prison bed and bedding. A luxury is allowed in very cold weather, if recommended by the surgeon—namely, a rug or blanket, or both. Prisoners shave daily, razors being served out for the purpose, and collected again by the warders. A part of the system which affects the smart-looking men most is the rule under which the hair of all prisoners is cut close to the head every fortnight. Prisoners of the first class may grow their hair for the last month of their sentence. All hands are served out with change of linen twice during the week. The amount of work done by the inmates of the naval prison amounts in value to about one thousand pounds per annum; and seeing that during the period of their incarceration, all pay, rations, and allowances are forfeited by the men, and credited to the Admiralty, it may be safely estimated that the extra cost of maintaining discipline, so far as this establishment is concerned, does not amount to much more than one thousand pounds annually.

On Sundays, necessary cleaning-up is all that is required. Prisoners rise at 6.30, and at 10.30 and 3 P.M. attend chapel (there is a chapel in the main

building), the families of officials and visitors being allowed in the gallery, from which they, however, can only see a series of close-cropped heads below. The men sing with considerable unction, and with remarkably good effect. There are found generally among seamen those who can sing, and the best are arranged in a choir, and are accompanied by a harmonium. The weekly silence has at least one effect that many a clergyman asks for in vain from his own congregation—the responses are given with an unexampled fervour, and the confession of sins, if not heartfelt, is at least loud in expression. Temporary seclusion from the world in this retreat has also the effect of interrupting epistolary correspondence with one's friends, for a prisoner with a sentence not exceeding three months is neither permitted to write home, receive letters, nor see visitors. Those in for a longer period may, after expiration of three months, if the governor approves, write one letter, receive one letter, and see one visitor per month, in presence of a warder. All letters sent and received are inspected by the governor. All prisoners in solitary confinement are allowed a seat in their cells, and every cell communicates with a gong in the corridor by means of a bell-handle in the cell. In order to know who has pulled the bell, both to attend to the prisoner's wants, and to secure against pulling it needlessly, the act of ringing turns a small ticket at right angles outwards; this has the number of the cell printed on it, and the prisoner cannot replace the same himself. The warder in the corridor can at once see who has rung. Of the eighteen warders, all are on duty every day, and three or four every night, so that it will be seen their place, irksome as it must otherwise be, is no sinecure in point of rest. The warder on night-duty has to patrol all the corridors. We were amused at seeing a specimen of his daily report—namely: 'I patrolled the corridors of the prison from o'clock A.M. till o'clock this morning, "pegging the tell-tale clock" every half-hour during that time.' As many of our readers may not know what 'pegging a tell-tale clock' is, we will explain it.

An ordinary clock-case contains clock-work which moves a dial-plate marked with the hours as usual from one to twelve; each hour is subdivided into four, thus shewing the quarters. This dial has no hands, but round the circumference are arranged forty-eight pegs, radiating outwards. Each peg moves in or out of a hole opposite each hour and quarter. The case is locked at night with all the pegs out; a handle from without being pulled, *exactly at any quarter*, causes a hammer to strike on the corresponding peg, and drives it in, where it remains till next day. Now, in order to be sure that the warder has done his duty, and kept awake, he is ordered to peg the tell-tale clock every hour, half-hour, or quarter, as may be determined. In order to do so, he must present himself at the clock-face exactly at the quarter, and pull the handle. Should he be a minute late, he may know what to expect, for, like time and tide, tell-tale clocks wait for no man, and dereliction of duty is necessarily visited with severe punishment in such an establishment. Every prisoner in solitary confinement is employed suitably, and receives moral and religious instruction, has suitable books given him to read, and is allowed as much open-air exercise as is good for his health. The fare is much the same as in other prisons; but we may

observe, that every man is weighed on entry and release, and that short-sentence prisoners are invariably lighter on exit, from unaccustomed food and labour, while long-sentence men increase in weight, from having got used to the work and the regularity of hours and diet.

The prison has been, since its establishment, entirely under the superintendence of its present governor, who is, of course, a naval officer of rank, and to whose judicious firmness, and method of carrying out the discipline prescribed, is due the fact, which is an important one, that very few men return a second time within its walls. Many doubtless keep steady from dislike of punishment, but very many also, who have entered indifferent characters, return to their ships thoroughly reformed. The royal navy and marine forces number sixty thousand men, and out of this number, as we have said, five hundred annually are committed to the naval prison.

THE OLD COPPER TOKENS.

PLENTY of books have first and last been written on coins issued by royal and competent authority, but little has ever been said regarding tokens, or pledges for small payments, resembling our present copper money. We shall endeavour to give some account of these tokens, which as lately as the reign of James I. were usually nothing else than bits of lead struck with a die. A project for a copper currency was attempted in Elizabeth's reign, but after pattern-pieces had been arranged for, the plan was abandoned. The corporation of Bristol were, however, authorised by the queen to issue and circulate a farthing token.

James I. in the eleventh year of his reign delegated his rights to coin copper money to Lord Harrington for a monetary consideration, the patent being, however, for farthings only. This patent was renewed by Charles I. on his accession to the throne; but the privilege was grossly abused by the patentees, as they issued the farthings in immense numbers of a merely nominal value, the coins weighing six grains only. They encouraged their circulation by selling twenty-one shillings-worth for one pound in silver; by this artifice, numbers of unprincipled persons were induced to buy them, and force them upon their customers at the rate of five, ten, and twenty shillings-worth at one time. The consequence was, that, in a short time, both in the metropolis and the adjacent counties, there was a great scarcity of gold and silver, their place being supplied by legions of these almost worthless pieces. This accumulation of patent farthings in the hands of the petty tradesmen caused the latter no small annoyance and loss, from the refusal of the unprincipled patentees to change them. The clamour became so great, that the outcry reached the ears of the House of Commons, and caused them to be suppressed in 1644 by a decision of that body; and the farthings were re-changed with money raised from the estates of the unprincipled patentees.

An authorised currency was intended to have been then struck, but owing to the Civil War, which

was then raging, the subject was driven out of people's heads, and the project fell to the ground. The execution of King Charles put an end to the exclusive prerogative of issuing money; a free trade in coining was the consequence, causing a general issue being made by tradesmen and tavern-keepers of those halfpence and farthings, both in copper and brass, which are best known as seventeenth-century tokens. These pieces being of more intrinsic worth, and of nearer approximation to their current value, than the almost universally detested patent farthings, speedily became popular. Another advantage which they had over the latter, was the facility with which they could be exchanged by the issuers for the coin they represented. They were thus tokens or pledges that the person whose name appeared on the coin would change them for the indicated value. For the convenience of changing tokens, tradesmen kept boxes divided into compartments, into which they placed the pieces until a sufficient quantity was collected, when they were returned to their issuers, to be exchanged for silver currency.

In London, the practice of changing the tokens became a trade, and some of the changers issued tokens themselves. As might be imagined, the shape and devices of the pieces varied according to the individual taste and fancy of the issuer; thus we have, besides the ordinary circular form, square, octagonal, diamond, and even heart-shaped coins. The size was generally the same for the farthings and halfpence—about that of our modern bronze farthings, but much thinner. Amongst the common devices were the arms of the Trade Companies of London, especially those of the Grocers', Mercers', and Drapers' guilds. On the town pieces issued by the authority of the corporation, the borough arms is generally found. It is noteworthy, that during the period between the death of Charles I. and the accession of his son, very few tokens bear the arms of the Commonwealth, although great numbers were issued; whilst, after the Restoration, the royal arms, the king's head, and other emblems of royalty, are common.

The spelling of the inscriptions on these coins of the people is most eccentric and irregular; this is partly due to the unsettled state of the English orthography at this period, and partly to the excessive ignorance of the token-makers. For instance: Wycombe (Bucks) is spelt in six ways—Wickham, Wikcombe, Wickiam, Wickcombe, Wickum, and Wiccombe; Market-Harborough seven ways; and Peterborough no less than ten ways. One ingenious gentleman takes the trouble to spell the name Peeterbourough. The Blue Anchor at Dover figures as the Blew Anker, the Mermaid in Cheapside variously as the Mearemayd, Mearmad, Mairmead, and Maremade. We have preserved, by means of these pieces, the name of many a quaint old London tavern; amongst others, are the World's End, Mother Redcap, Devil and St Dunstan, Have-at-it, Three Nuns, Two Kings

and Still, Daniel and the Lions, Hercules' Pillars, The Labour in Vain, Dagger and Magpie, Five Inkhorns, Horns and Horseshoe, Crooked Billet, &c.

Almost every trade figures on the tokens, many of which are now obsolete, or are known by other names, as, Slaymaker, Throyster, Baysmaker, Capper, Starcher, &c.

There is a Newbury token which was issued by no less a personage than the rector himself, Joseph Sayer; the reverse has the appropriate device of an open Bible.

That this popular money was issued mainly for the convenience of the poor, is manifest by many of the mottoes on the tokens. On the town-piece of Oundle, we read: 'For the Use of the Poor;' on those of Limerick and Tamworth: 'Change and Charitie;' that of Andover: 'Remember the Poor;' and on that of Lichfield:

To supply the poores need
Is charity indeed.

Amongst other inscriptions, these are frequently found: 'For change, not fraud;' 'For the poores advantage;' 'I am for a publique good;' 'I am for better cheng.' One sentimental trader has on his token the device of two pigeons cooing, with the motto: 'Good-morrow, Valentine.' Many pieces have patriotic and loyal inscriptions, as: 'Fear God, and honour the King;' 'Long live the King;' 'Rather dead than disloyal.' An Irish token has: 'The diligent hand maketh rich;' and on another: 'Teporary will change them again.'

Tokens continued in circulation from about 1648 until the issue of royal copper money in 1672. It is probable that considerably over ten thousand varieties were in existence at this time. Boyne, the best authority on this subject, describes more than nine thousand in his work, of which number about three thousand belong to London and its suburbs alone.

As we have seen, this popular coinage originated with a great public necessity, but at last became almost a nuisance; nearly every tradesman issued tokens as a kind of advertisement, and being only payable at the house of the maker, these were very inconvenient.

The government of Charles II. had for some time intended the circulation of copper money, and as soon as it was ready for issue, which was not until 1672, the tokens were suppressed, by a very stringent proclamation, and their circulation ceased almost immediately. Boyne says: 'A few attempts were made to continue them; but the threat of government proceedings against the offenders, effectually put them down, and we hear no more of them.' In Ireland, so late as 1679, a few were issued. It is rather remarkable, that while great quantities of tokens were issued in England and Ireland, none are to be met with in Scotland; the patent farthings seem, therefore, to have fulfilled the requirements of the people. Tokens were needed no more by the public, after the issue of a royal coinage, until the latter part of the eighteenth century, when, owing to the scarcity of copper money, great numbers were

issued; but with this series, we have at present nothing to do, as they can scarcely be considered like the interesting old tokens we have discussed as the 'money of the poor.'

ADVENTURE OF A DIGGER IN COLORADO.

I AM a dweller in towns, and a lover of them. To me, meaningless are the rhapsodies of those who delight in the majestic solitude of nature, and the wild glorious freedom of the untrodden desert. Central Park, and that portion of New York lying within a mile of it, was always wild enough and varied enough for my taste; the Jersey City or Staten Island ferries were marine enough for me. As for the tales of adventure from the frontier, I only shuddered at them, and held the whole race of gold-miners, above all, in something like terror. Yet it was fated that I should become a gold-digger, by proxy at anyrate, and a most successful one too, and this is how it came to pass.

It is not so many years back since my wife's brother died in Colorado. He had always been a wild sort of fellow, fit only for a life among miners, yet we liked him much, for he had many good qualities. He was injured by the falling of some rock; and the nearest doctor—they had one not more than sixty miles away—said that although he might linger a good while, even months, perhaps, he must die from the accident. So Dick got a comrade, who was going eastward, to send me a telegram as soon as he got where telegraphs existed, detailing what had happened, and begging me to go to him. I need scarcely say how little this was to my taste, but we did not hesitate a moment; we liked poor Dick, and I thought it very probable that he was lying on a bed of pain without a friend, and without a dollar. My wife was naturally even more solicitous about him than myself.

The trip westward has been told too often to need any description from me: I journeyed through what seemed almost interminable space, and at last reached that gathering of (then) mean habitations, called Denver. (I was there again last year, and found it slightly changed.) The place where Dick lay was, I found, about a hundred miles from Denver; and I found also, that the best, if not the only way to get there, was on horseback; and now the real horrors of my journey began. I travelled by myself, or if, by chance, I had companions for a few miles, these were so rough, wild, and uncouth, that I was always heartily glad to be rid of them; and the same when the monotony of the mountain track was broken by descending teams, or parties of horsemen; their presence frightened me a great deal more than their absence, yet I cannot recall a single instance of even rudeness on their part; but I was scared generally.

I had, of course, taken care to ascertain, before starting on my lonely ride, that there was no fear of Indians, who had all, it seemed, temporarily left

the district; so one great cause of fear was removed. Briefly, then, I reached Inauguration Town, so called because of the day when the first tent was pitched there, and found it a miserable place. A dozen log-huts, five of them being saloons, and about forty tents, formed the 'city,' as it not unfrequently styled itself. In a wretched room at the back of the largest saloon, I found poor Dick, in a sad state. He was very glad to see me, but it was plain he was not long for this world; he knew this well enough, and talked of his death as calmly as though he had been speaking of some one else. On one point I was quite surprised—so far from needing any help in money-matters, he was really a rich man, and handed me deposit notes amounting to some thousands of dollars, and made over to me the gold and valuables which were lying to his credit at the 'Bank.' Everything was done in a most informal way; but a complete answer to all my doubts and queries was given, by saying, that such was 'Miners' Law;' and anyhow, I had the proceeds of the gold duly handed to me the day after Dick's death.

When the poor fellow was gone, I had nothing to detain me at Inauguration Town, and so left it, as I had approached it, on horseback. I could have had company, as the landlord of the saloon told me there was an 'outfit' starting for Denver on the next morning; and taking it for granted that I should embrace the opportunity, he introduced several of the 'boys' to me at once; but such a wild, desperate-looking set I never saw, and would not have travelled with for the world. Very greatly to my host's astonishment, I called for my horse, and rode off at mid-day, more nervous on the score of my possible companions than of any roadside enemies.

I got on very well that day, and slept at a house where I had stopped on my upward journey. The citizen who dwelt there seemed glad to see me, after the apathetic fashion of these western people, but seemed astonished too, I thought, and when I was going away, he, in his rude way, complimented me on my courage: he said I had more *grit* in me than any down-easter he had ever seen. 'In fact, boss, there's many a western man would be skeary at riding alone through this locality, now the Utes is back so thick, and so nasty as they are too; but,' he went on, 'you have the real grit, I can see.' I rode off, completely staggered by his speech; and I doubt if any man in the world was ever so utterly cowed by a compliment on his courage. I resolved to ride very slowly, and allow the wild 'outfit' from Inauguration to overtake me; but one can't control one's fate. I had not ridden half-a-dozen miles, before I saw winding up a hill, to the brow of which I had just climbed, at least a score of Indians. They were, luckily, at least a couple of miles from me, and so there was every opportunity for me to avoid them.

I did not like the idea of riding directly back, so determined to take advantage of a ravine which ran parallel to the road I was pursuing, and which latter was little better than a ravine itself, especially as, from my elevated position, I thought I could see where it issued into the plain below. I hesitated no longer, but turned into the ravine,

and was glad to find traces of a road and of travellers there; so, judging one way was used about as much as the other, I jogged cheerfully on.

I saw no house at which to get my mid-day meal, but I did not mind that, as, from the rate at which I had been descending, I reckoned I should soon strike the plain. I dismounted by the side of a little spring, and with my flask, and some crackers and sardines, managed pretty well. I had just lighted my cigar, and was lying under the shelter of a solitary tree, when, suddenly, a mounted figure came over a little stony ridge just behind me. I started up, and he started back. A more suspicious-looking character it would be difficult to imagine. He was a tall man, wearing a felt or leathern hat, squeezed into no shape at all; his black hair had probably not been cut for a twelvemonth; he was clad in buckskin from neck to ankle; a buffalo robe covered his saddle, by the side of which hung an eighteen-shot repeating rifle; on each hip he carried a large revolver; and a straight knife in a leathern sheath hung in his belt. At the sight of me, he recoiled, as I have said, and half drew one of his revolvers; but seeing that I was alone, and quite in his power, he came slowly on, keeping, however, his eye on me all the while. I thought conciliation best, so said: 'Good-morning.'

'Good-evening,' he replied; as everybody out there would have replied, whatever the time of day.

'Will you have a drop of brandy?' I asked, by a sudden impulse. He grimly smiled assent, and drank, pronouncing it 'good'; then he said: 'Where's your hoss, stranger?'

I looked round, and, to my dismay, saw that my steed had vanished—'had vamoosed,' the stranger said; then continued: 'I thought I saw a hoss in the gully over there, and when I see you, I thought it might be you. Here; come this way.'

I scrambled over the rugged slope after him; but the horse was nowhere in sight. The stranger pointed to where he had seen it, and then, by signs totally unintelligible to me, we tracked it for some half a mile, until we found it in a perfect maze of rocks and gullies. I thanked him very heartily, and made an offer of reward; but with the same apathy which had marked his conversation all through, he declined it, and bidding me 'good-day,' rode slowly off, first having conducted me back to the track.

I followed the road for a long time, until I began to grow uneasy at the time which elapsed before I struck the plain. I could no longer see the base of the hills, and although I believed I knew the exact direction I ought to follow, I at last began to conceive the possibility of my having lost my way. To get back to my original road before nightfall, was impracticable, and I pushed desperately on, until nothing but the highest peaks of the tremendous mountains behind me were tinged by the setting sun. In a very short time this died away, and the valleys and ravines below became more dense and gloomy every minute.

All this time I saw no living thing, save that twice a mountain wolf crossed my road a few score yards ahead of me. To make matters worse, I found that my horse was nearly exhausted, and could only limp painfully along the rough track. I was growing more out of heart with my situation than I ever was in my life, when, on turning an

angle, I found that I had come upon a large tract of level ground, and that, not a hundred yards ahead, stood a shanty, from which a light feebly gleamed. My jaded horse pricked up his ears and stumbled briskly along, and in another minute I was knocking at the rude door. It was thrown open by a gaunt-looking fellow, in an old blue army cloak, and who held, although he partially concealed it, a pistol in his right hand. The interior, as I could see, was of the most uninviting character—scarcely an article of furniture, and lighted by a lamp which, void of glass, flared on the window-ledge.

I told my case, and sullenly bidding me turn my horse into the corral by the side of the house, and then enter, he moved away. When I had secured my steed in the inclosure, and the door of the shanty swung to behind me, I was almost sorry I had not chosen to sleep with the wolves in the mountain gullies. My host was silent and sullen, showing very plainly his intention not to talk; presently, however, he said: 'Guess you'll want supper. There's water in that pail; there's whisky in that bottle; there's beef in that locker. You can't have nothing else.'

I said, which was partly true, that I was too tired to eat. I certainly could not have eaten or drunk in his dirty hovel, or of such uninviting food, especially with so forbidding a ruffian for my companion.

'Then you'll want to go to sleep,' he said roughly, and kicked a bundle apart, disclosing a couple of buffalo robes, with two rude pillows. 'There you are. Go to bed, then.'

It was of no use betraying any fear, and he was evidently giving up his bed to me, so I lay down, and in a short time was dozing, when I was aroused by hearing the tread of a horse, and then the door opened. I half rose from my bed, and, to my surprise, saw enter the man whom I had met at mid-day on the mountain. He recognised me too, but said nothing distinct.

'Well, how is it, Joe?' said the other man, with a very serious, if not anxious look.

'Bad,' said my friend, or 'Joe'—'very bad. It's all correct.'

'And are they—are the boys'—began the other. 'Yes,' said Joe, filling up the pause; 'they mean coming. They may come to-morrow—perhaps to-night. We shall have to vamoose.'

They conversed in undertones, as they sat on their rude stools by the low wood-fire, chewing or smoking, and occasionally drinking from a whisky-bottle; their discourse seemed very grave and disquieting, and from a word or two I caught, and from their glances, I fancied they were often referring to me. At last, in spite of myself, I fell asleep, and tired as I was, might have slumbered till morning, but a tremendous crash awoke me, and, rising, I saw that the door had been burst open, and that the shanty was filling with strangers all armed, while Joe and his comrade had drawn suddenly to my side of the room. On the instant, half-a-dozen men surrounded them, and took their firearms.

'Hollo!' exclaimed one of the new-comers, as he caught sight of me, 'who is this? Are there three in the gang?'

All eyes being upon me, although I did not quite understand the situation, I explained briefly who I was; and the account seemed satisfactory.

'Now, Joe Blakey, and you, Phil Marll, I reckon you know why we have come?' said the man who seemed spokesman.

'Guess we do,' said Joe, in his usual apathetic tone.

'You expected a visit,' continued the man. 'We have heard all your bragging agin the Vigilantes'—

'Never said so,' interrupted Joe.

I was amazed at these words. Here was I in the presence of the promptest, most terrible tribunal of modern times, and I divined only too clearly their errand. The Vigilantes, or Vigilance Committee, as may be known, is a self-constituted body, which, in the remote parts of the United States, springs into spontaneous existence to remedy in a rough fashion the monstrous defects of the prevalently imperfect courts of justice. Acting without, and, in fact, in defiance of, law, these committees, though doing things roughly, help materially to make life endurable for well-disposed citizens. Without the sense of justice which these vigilant and self-constituted bodies exercise, the great western wildernesses, with their sparsely settled population, and feeble judicial administration, would not be tolerable.

I soon understood the purport of the visit, as addressed to my host. 'You've been a terror to this here neighbourhood,' continued the spokesman; 'you've stole horses and cattle for more than two years past, and tried to put it all on the Indians. You have murdered men; and this here traveller would never have seen daylight again, if we hadn't come in. You got the Jew from Santa Fé into your shanty, and robbed and killed him.'

'No, captain!' burst out Joe; 'I bar that. I don't deny the hosses, nor the cattle; and I may hev killed a man or two; so may hev Phil; but I never touched the Jew, nor killed a man in my own shanty; and this here traveller should have gone his way a safe man.' Then turning to me, he said: 'You don't believe I meant killing of you, stranger?'

'I do not!' I said very emphatically, for I meant it.

'Well, there's enough agin you without that,' said the spokesman; 'though we know you ain't so bad as Phil. You've been warned to go, time after time.'

'Not reglar warned, captain,' argued Joe; 'and now we are agoin.'

'No, you ain't, you bet,' said the captain with a meaning smile, which ran responsively through his band; 'no, you ain't. Your time has come; but you shall have a fair trial from the Vigilantes here assembled; and what their judgment is, you must abide by.'

In an instant, a sort of formality was given to the assembly, the captain and another being the centre of a semicircle, while opposite to them were the two prisoners, guarded by four men. I suppose there must have been seventeen or eighteen of the Vigilantes altogether. With a rapidity that almost stunned me, the trial began and concluded. The prisoners offered no particular defence, they seemed conscious of its inutilty, and the 'evidence' against them was chiefly accusation—but it sufficed. When the captain asked the verdict, there was a unanimous reply of 'Guilty'; and he addressed the culprits thus: 'Say—Joe

Blakey and Phil Marll, you hev heard the evidence in this honourable Committee of Vigilantes, and the verdict of guilty. We therefore intend to string you up, and we mean to clear the country of all thieves, right away. You have ten minutes allowed you to leave any message you wish.'

The apathy of the two men was extraordinary: Phil only scowled savagely at the speaker; while Joe absolutely turned to his nearest guard, and asked him for a 'chew'; and the guard, pulling a cake of tobacco from his breast, handed it to Joe, who broke a piece off, and began masticating it with apparent relish. Just then, I caught his eye, and I thought it was fixed on me with such a hopeless yet appealing look, that I could hesitate no longer. With an energy which surprised myself, I broke out into an appeal for the lives of the condemned, explained how I had been received by them, and given the best they had, and how Joe had helped me to find my horse in the day. 'I will be security,' I concluded, 'that they leave the neighbourhood. I bear letters from good houses in New York to several persons in this vicinity, some of whom may be known to you, and which will prove I can bear out my offer.' I drew my letters from my pocket, and read the addresses: 'Captain Hiram Danks; Major Julius Blumper; Sheriff Gollopy; Colonel Vanwoort; Captain Himpus'—

'That's me,' said a rough-looking man. 'Give it here.'

He wasn't much after my idea of a captain; but, as it could do no harm, I gave him the letter. He read it, and handed it to the captain, a leader of the band, who read it also.

'Yes; that's all squar enough,' said the latter; 'but the Vigilantes out here don't vally New Yorkers, and don't work according to New York laws.'

'Nor they don't want no New York money,' said a voice from the rear.

An assenting murmur endorsed this sentiment, and I felt things were looking very black for my hosts. They were evidently of the same opinion, for Joe smiled sadly and said: 'It ain't of no use, squire; we're just as much obliged, though. I wouldn't say no more, or you'll maybe get into trouble yourself.—If things is ready, I'm ready,' he continued, turning to the leader.

'Well, we shan't keep you a-waiting long, Joe Blakey,' responded the latter; 'I hear the young men a-coming back; they have been choosing a tree.'

With horror, I exclaimed; 'I never dreamt of such cold-blooded work as this!—Look here, captain; the only reason I don't offer money is, because I believe I should do more harm than good by it; but, if you hang these men, you will send me away with the feeling that I have their blood on my head, for they expected your visit, and I believe that, but for my presence, they would have made their escape to-night. If you won't listen to anything else, you might think of that.'

I was pleased to see that my words made some impression, for instead of answering me in his calm, cruel style, the captain turned to his gang, and a low but earnest discussion took place. At last he turned round, and, in a very stern voice, quite different to that in which he had previously spoken, said: 'Hear me, stranger! The Vigilantes are sorry for your position, and respect your feelin's; but this is their decision, and I warn

you that if you question it by a single word, you will ruin the man you most seek to help.—Joe Blakey, you are considered by this honourable court as the best of the two, but you are very bad for all that. Your life is spared on condition that you hev cleared out from here in six hours, and are not found within a hundred miles of here ever after. Of course we give you time to go the journey.—Phil Marll, we know yer are a murderer, and a treacherous one—you die! These is the sentence.—Boys! string up Phil Marll.—If you like to see justice done in these western parts, stranger, come out with us; if not, good-bye.

I turned deathly sick, as the procession left the shanty, Joe and I being its only occupants. One man, however, turned back, and said: 'O squire! you must excuse my neglect; but I am Captain Himpus, and I live at Three Creek Farm, over yonder. My wife and the young ladies will be glad to see you; and if you will stop a month with us, we shall be all the more pleased. I will introduce you to all our best citizens, and I'll answer they will be happy to have you among them.'

I stammered out a few words, and he hurried off, to be present at the catastrophe. We saw no more of them; but, after a few minutes of almost agonising silence, we heard a band of horsemen ride past the cabin, and could even hear their voices and laughter. I looked almost timidly at Joe, who heaved a heavy sigh, and breaking silence for the first time since his reprieve, said: 'They've done with Phil: there was worse men in the room than him, when the Vigilantes was here; though I don't deny, squire, that we hev been hard wretches.' He paused, as if taking a mental retrospect of the wretched portion of his life, then, very suddenly changing his tone, said: 'Now, squire, I must go, and that right away. I know where they've hung Phil: I shall cut him down, and leave some money with old Padre Francisco to have him buried, and all that; but before I go I have something important to say to you.'

'Do you require'—I began, putting my hand into my breast-pocket, for I thought he wished to borrow money; but he waved his hand and said: 'No; quite different. I have plenty of stamps, and if I hadn't got to clear out now, should soon be the richest man in these diggings. You saved my life, stranger, and hevn't made no fuss about it; and I feel it. You came down from the mountains by this long gulch at the back, I suppose?' I assented. 'Thought so,' he continued. 'Well, stranger, about half a mile up that gulch, a smaller gulch turns off—you'll know it, because it's the first on the left you come to—that gulch contains the richest lead of gold in Colorado, and it's a fortin for a man in a single season. I can't touch it now, but I hev got the claim, and I hereby give you over that claim. Work it, and you're a millionaire.' I strove to thank him, and to offer him the proceeds, or half; but he silenced me, and said he didn't want to hear any more of the place. 'You stop in here, squire,' he said, 'while I go and do what I've got to do for Phil.'

So he went, and I sat alone in the shanty until dawn, when he returned, looking as cold and impassive as ever. He mounted his horse—the Vigilantes had left one for him, and my own, out of several—and rode away, and I never saw or heard of him again—unless Joe Baker, from Colorado, who was shot at a saloon in Nevada, was

my friend, as some of my mining acquaintances declared to be the case.

I had mining acquaintances, and I followed the counsel given me, and worked the gulch, which, by the bye, I proposed to call Annabella Laurentina Gulch, after my eldest daughter; but which the people about, and even the county surveyor, would call Ugly Barney Gulch. Why, or who Barney was, I had not the least idea. But as Blakey averred, it was the 'richest lead' in Colorado; I took many thousand dollars from it that summer, and then sold it to a Company for many thousand dollars more. It is exhausted now, but its original purchasers were enriched. No amount of gold, however, would tempt me to reside in a country where Vigilantes, with their Lynch law, are a permanent institution, and where I used, at twilight, to fancy I saw the phantom of the ill-favoured Phil Marll lurking among the shadows and holes at the foot of the ravines.

CHIMES.

O CIRCLE out again, sweet chimes,
Across the intervening space;
You touch in me the tenderest trace,
My memory of the earliest times.

On me you ever exercise
A sorcery words can ne'er explain;
My tongue to tell it tries in vain,
Unspeakable in me it lies.

O mingled welcome and adieu;
O strangely tintured charm of bells;
The mystic that within me dwells
Is answering harp-string unto you.

You whisper out across the sky
A spell I never can define;
You make your wizard sweetness mine;
Touch out the tears that in me lie.

O pastoral dream of joy and bliss,
'Goodwill and Peace' to all mankind!
Evangal to the human mind,
To drying eyes, and lips that kiss!

The nameless music of the bells
Is mystic melody to me;
And dimly stirs my spirit's sea;
The speechless that within us dwells:

Emotions none can all-impart—
And better so, more great and deep,
Wherein the Infinite doth sleep,
The soul of every human heart.

O bells with your triumphant peal
Above the heads of mingled men;
Thy spirit world surpasses pen,
And teaches what it is, to feel.

To all conditions, every age
You waken truths that will not die,
Refreshing man's false memory,
And brightening life's tear-blotted page.

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